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Will Smithâ??s Big Personality on Full Display in Santa Barbara

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

WILL SMITH AND AUNJANUE ELLIS ACCEPT OUTSTANDING PERFORMER OF THE YEAR AWARD AND ANIMATORS IN CONVERSATION AT THE 37TH ANNUAL SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (March 6, 2022) â?? Day 5 of the 37th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival featured a tribute presented by Manitou Fund to **Will Smith** and **Aunjanue Ellis,** who received the Outstanding Performer of the Year Award, for their outstanding performances in this yearâ??s â??King Richardâ?• from Warner Bros Pictures.

Smith and Ellis sat down with The Hollywood Reporterâ??s longtime awards columnist and host of its popular Awards Chatter podcast, **Scott Feinberg** for an in-depth discussion about their cinematic careers.

Following their conversation with Feinberg, King Richard director **Reinaldo Marcus Green** presented them with the Outstanding Performer of the Year Award. Reinaldo opened his remarks by saying: â??It is absolutely my pleasure and honor to present tonightâ??s award for Outstanding Performers of the Year to the stars of King Richard, Will Smith, and Aunjanue Ellis. Working with these two was like sitting in on a master class every day. Weâ??ve all seen Will knock it out of the park for years, so I expected greatness. But when he stepped into the role as Richard Williams, I was blown away. The way he embodied this man, this father, with a commitment, it was truly special to see. Aunjanue Ellis, wow. As my mentor Spike Lee would say, sheâ??s da truth. She brought this quiet intensity and absolutely crushed every scene she was in. Working with both Will and Aunjanue was truly one of the joys of my early career.â?•

The Outstanding Performers of the Year Award recognizes select individuals who have distinguished themselves with exceptional performances in film this past year. Past recipients of the award include Sacha Baron Cohen, Adam Driver, Rami Malek, Margot Robbie, and Allison Janney, Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone, Brie Larson and Saoirse Ronan, Steve Carell, Cate Blanchett, Jennifer Lawrence, Viola Davis, James Franco, Colin Firth, Penelope Cruz, Angelina Jolie, Helen Mirren, Heath Ledger, Kate Winslet, and Charlize Theron.

Earlier in the day featured the newest panel at the festival, the Animation Panel. Attendees gathered for Charise Castro Smith â?? Co-Writer/Co-Director (ENCANTO), Charlotte De Le Gournerie â?? Producer (FLEE), Enrico Casarosa â?? Co-Writer/Director (LUCA) Mike Rianda â?? Co-Writer/Co-Director (THE MITCHELLS VS. THE MACHINES), Don Hall â?? Co-Director (RAYA AND THE LAST DRAGON) in conversation, led by SBIFF Executive Director Roger Durling.

Upcoming live conversations and tributes will include presentations to Nicole Kidman, Javier Bardem, PenÃ©lope Cruz, Benedict Cumberbatch, and Oscar-nominated artisans. The 37th Santa Barbara International Film Festival, presented by UGGÂ®, will take place IN-PERSON through March 12, 2022. 200+ films, filmmaker Q&As, industry panels, and celebrity tributes, will be held throughout Santa Barbara, including at the historic Arlington Theatre. This yearâ??s lineup is available on SBIFFâ??s mobile app. For additional information or to buy passes, visit sbiff.org.



About the Santa Barbara International Film Festival

The Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts and educational organization dedicated to discovering and showcasing the best in independent and international cinema. Over the past 36 years, SBIFF has become one of the leading film festivals in the United States â?? attracting 100,000+ attendees and offering 11 days of 200+ films, tributes and symposiums, fulfilling their mission to engage, enrich, and inspire the Santa Barbara community through film. In 2016, SBIFF entered a new era with the acquisition of the historic and beloved Riviera Theatre. After a capital campaign and renovation, the theatre is now SBIFFâ??s new state-of-the-art, year-round home, showing new international and independent films every day. In 2019, SBIFF opened its own Education Center in downtown Santa Barbara on State Street to serve as a home for its many educational programs and a place for creativity and learning.

(Press release provided by Michelle Tarangelo, Sunshine Sachs)

Category

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Tags

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2. King Richard
3. Reinaldo Marcus Green
4. Will Smith

Date Created
March 7, 2022
Author
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